

## Ethnic buffer institutions: the immigrant press: New York City, 1820-1984

Blau, Judith R.; Thomas, Mim; Newhouse, Beverly; Kavee, Andrew

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version  
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Zur Verfügung gestellt in Kooperation mit / provided in cooperation with:  
GESIS - Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften

### Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Blau, J. R., Thomas, M., Newhouse, B., & Kavee, A. (1998). Ethnic buffer institutions: the immigrant press: New York City, 1820-1984. *Historical Social Research*, 23(3), 20-37. <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.23.1998.3.20-37>

### Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY Lizenz (Namensnennung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier:  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de>

### Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). For more Information see:  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

## Ethnic Buffer Institutions The Immigrant Press: New York City, 1820-1984

*Judith R. Blau, Mim Thomas, Beverly Newhouse, Andrew Kavee\**

**Abstract:** Among the most important ethnic institutions is the immigrant press, but the role it plays is subject to some debate. Distinguishing between Old (Northern European) and New (South, Central and Eastern European) Immigrants to New York City and their newspapers, this research examines hypotheses that relate to immigration waves, actual numbers of new arrivals, foreign-born diversity, unemployment, and immigration restrictions. The conclusion is that newspapers are founded as new immigrants arrive and, therefore, they primarily play an important role in the reception of newcomers and not in the establishment and maintenance of ethnic communities. Fear also plays a role; newspaper publication declines when immigration restrictions are imposed. Finally, the results permit some speculation about the contingencies of ethnic identity, and whether identity depends more on the origins of immigrants or is contingent on conditions in the places of their destinations.

Immigrant groups create institutions that assist them in the transition that involves great adjustments, losses, and challenges. There are many institutions that help to create bridges between their communities of origin and their new ones. These include neighborhoods and enclaves, churches, ethnic enterprises, clubs, and benevolent associations, but ethnic press may be the most important and universal (Wittke 1957; Walker 1964; Joyce 1976; Jaret 1979; Pozzetta 1991, Portes and Zhou 1993; Hirschman 1994)<sup>1</sup> Although immigration and the

---

\* Address all correspondence to the senior author, Department of Sociology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3210 USA; judith.blau@unc.edu.

This paper was presented at the 1998 annual Eastern Sociological Society meetings. We acknowledge the Support of the National Science Foundation (SES-9108923 and SES-8907765) and University of North Carolina's Institute for the Arts and Humanities and Institute for Research in Social Science.

<sup>1</sup> »Foreign-language press«, »ethnic press«, and »immigrant press« are used often used interchangeably, although our results will suggest that »immigrant press« is the better term.

ethnic press in the US is the focus of this study, migration is currently high in many places, which once again raises questions about the ways in which newcomers are incorporated into host societies.

The precise role of immigrant newspapers has been the subject of debate because it bears on issues of community, identity, and incorporation. The conventional interpretation, at least for those published in America, is based on the pioneering work of Robert E. Park (1922), who emphasized that newspapers provide a mechanism of social control in ethnic communities and help to accelerate assimilation. A very different view was held by Arendt (1994; also see Sells 1977), who suggested that the immigrant press helps to affirm national origins by allowing groups to maintain ties with the old country and, thereby, to assert their identities in a diverse, and sometimes, chaotic, new environment. On the other hand, Dinnerstein and Reimers (1988; also see Dinnerstein, Nichols and Reimers 1979) propose that newspapers primarily serve welfare needs for new immigrants, such as supplying them with practical advice and with assistance about housing, jobs, and schools to ease the transition to America.

Park's interpretation implies that newspapers are founded after large waves of immigration, when assimilation problems loom large, as does Arendt's interpretation, as she emphasizes the importance of the press in helping resident Americans maintain ties to the old country. However, Dinnerstein and Reimer's emphasis on the instrumental importance of newspapers suggests that they are established at the time immigrants arrive and when they need most assistance. It is also important to consider the effects of anti-immigrant policy on the foreign-language press because newspapers are public expressions of community and ethnic identity. Newspapers may serve as a litmus test of how secure the members of an ethnic community are or how apprehensive they are about natives' attitudes or government policies. Not publishing papers may heighten barriers between newcomers and natives, and thereby, possibly, fueling further hostility and fear. Newspapers, we propose, are an indication of a healthy and viable process of community building, which is important to all new immigrants, but also for their relations with the members of their host society.

We use virtually all the ethnic newspapers published in New York prior to 1984, and examine the effects of large waves of new immigrants as well as their actual annual numbers,<sup>2</sup> unemployment, and restrictive legislation. To explore the possibility that immigrant groups assert their identity under conditions of population diversity (Novak 1973; Tuchman 1991; Anderson 1991;

---

»Foreign-language« is misleading in the US case because many papers were published in English and some had separate editions with two languages.

<sup>2</sup> There are no records of the actual numbers of immigrants to individual US cities, but the overwhelming majority of non-Asian immigrants before around 1980 arrived in New York City, and roughly representative numbers of them remained even if only for a brief period of time (Portes and Rumbaut 1990; Jones 1992).

Waters 1990), we examine the effects of foreign-born heterogeneity on newspaper foundings. This question has direct bearing on the essentialism debate. According to the »essentialist« or »primordialist« view (see Barth 1969), ethnic identity is relatively constant; whereas according to the »instrumentalist« view (see Cohen 1974; Erikson 1993), ethnicity is socially constructed in response to varying conditions. We also examine the effects of one group's immigration rate on the other's newspaper establishment rates to test for the presumed positive effects of ethnic competition (Nee and Nee 1986; Olzak 1986, 1992).

## The Demography of Immigration

### Old and New Immigrant Groups

The distinction Lieberman (1963, 1980; see also Tyree 1995) makes between Old Immigrants from Northern Europe and New Immigrants from Southern, Central and Eastern Europe (SCE) is useful for New York for our entire time series.<sup>3</sup> The composition of the Old and New Immigrants is different, and so is the timing of their initial arrivals and the conditions of their settlement. Throughout the eighteenth century, the arrival of some Old Immigrant groups from Northern Europe (NE) – namely, mostly English, French, Dutch, Norwegian, and Scottish settlers – proceeded with little fanfare; resources were vast and Cities were expanding. Except for Catholics, who were generally disliked by the growing Protestant majority, these groups easily blended into American life. Low rates of entry around the Napoleonic Wars, from the 1790's to about 1815, hastened the assimilation of the members of the groups that had initially arrived in the eighteenth century.

The large wave of NE (Old) immigrants in the 1840s and 1850s was spearheaded by the Irish, having been dislocated owing to the potato blight and the enclosure laws that had led to widespread famine, but they were soon accompanied by Germans. At the end of the Civil War economic conditions were favorable in the United States while there were economic calamities throughout northern Europe, which attracted increasing numbers of Germans, Swedes, Danes, and Irish. For these groups that arrived in the 1840s and 1850s and also in their own second wave in the 1870s, the American economy was relatively good, and these were the decades in which groups successfully established communities and social institutions to overcome the ordeals of settlement. Members of these groups had long periods of time to found churches, social Clubs, charitable Services, and mutual benefit societies that would benefit subsequent arrivals.

Whatever the country of origin, members of the Old Immigrant groups had arrived at auspicious times of growth and expansion, and the Civil War united

---

<sup>3</sup> Until 1984, which is the end of the series, there were relatively few »New-New« immigrants to New York.

Northerners and created a remarkable sense of inclusion. The early brands of nativism virtually disappeared by 1870, giving these groups time to build their own institutions and to become incorporated into American political, social, and economic life. Irish, German, and Norwegians continued to arrive in very large numbers, but they were received into established communities. Moreover, even around the 1890s when recessions rocked the economy, Old groups were relatively advantaged because New Immigrants from Italy, Poland, Russia and elsewhere were taking the lowest paying and least desirable jobs (Bruchey 1990).

New Immigrants began to arrive in their own first wave in the 1880s, mixed in with the third wave of the Old (NE) Immigrants. These SCE groups were handicapped because the intense pace of immigration made it difficult to lay down institutions for new arrivals, and also because there were major economic downturns in the 1890s, creating severe problems for the members of groups that did not have a continuous presence in the US (Licht 1995). Groups that made up the New Immigration waves may have had little in common with one another but they shared the same conditions in US Cities – the same squalor and overcrowding, and the same low wages. None had the established institutions that the Germans, Irish, Norwegians and other Northern European groups had. Arriving in large numbers during a period of maturing industrial growth and increasing economic inequalities, New Immigrants had to create and develop their institutions and communities rapidly in order to help ease individuals and families into their new environments.

Certainly the Old Immigrant groups experienced some hostility. The nativist movements of the 1830s through the 1850s did find expression in political parties (Native American, Anti-Masonic Nullifiers and the Know-Nothing parties), but virulent anti-foreign sentiments only became pervasive later in the century. The most vicious attacks were directed against groups from South, Central, and Eastern Europe (Simon 1985; Hofstadter (1944) 1992). A series of laws were passed, beginning in 1872, and but the most restrictive ones were passed in the 1920s. Immigration came to a virtual stop and only slowly recovered later in the century.

In sum, the Old Immigrant groups began arriving in large numbers when the economy was growing, and although their immigration rates remained high, the communities they had earlier established eased the arrival and adjustment of subsequent newcomers. The New Immigrant groups came at a time when there were initially high needs for unskilled labor and then a rapid decline, owing to advances in automation and machinery, and overproduction. They experienced far more nativism and xenophobia than the Old Immigrants had and the laws passed in the 1920s penalized them the most.

## Data and Estimation Techniques

The primary source for immigrant newspapers, along with founding dates, United States Newspaper National Union List (1985), which was supplemented with Fox (1927), Ramage and Wescott (1934), Rowell (1869- ) and Ayer (1880- ). The two time series are: 1821 to 1984 for the Old Immigrants, and 1860 to 1984 for the New Immigrants.<sup>4</sup> Because this is a dynamic, overtime process involving count data, Poisson regression is used.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1 summarizes the number of papers published in New York classified by Old and New Immigrant groups. It is evident that of the Old groups, Germans founded the most papers, followed by the Irish and French. Of the new groups, the highest representation is for Spanish-speaking groups, Italians, Russian, Chinese, and Serbo-Croatian. Figures 1 and 2, respectively, are graphs of the annual numbers of the Old and New immigrants and the numbers of papers they established. The highest peak immigration period for the Old Immigrant groups is right after the end of the Civil War, but there are multiple other smaller peak periods. The pattern for the New Immigrants is quite different, with one very prominent peak in the early 1900s.

Impressionistically, it appears that high rates of newspaper foundings accompany high immigration periods, that is, around 1872 for the Old (Figure 1) and around 1910 for the New (Figure 2). It also appears that newspaper foundings fluctuate with immigration waves. But there are some exceptions. For the Old groups there was a high rate of newspaper foundings around 1822 and 1933 when immigration was not high, and there was a low rate of newspaper foundings around 1905 when immigration was high. For the New groups, the 1870s and the 1940s were periods of high newspaper foundings in spite of low immigration, and there were few new papers in the late 1970 when immigration was high.

For both groups, however, it appears that annual immigration volume of peak periods of immigration, or both, should be good predictors of newspaper establishment. It is evident that percent foreign born for this long period would be a poor predictor of newspaper foundings. Although the percent of New York's population that is foreign-born declines over time, as does immigration,

---

<sup>4</sup> Only a very few of the very early papers are excluded, and left-hand censoring is no a particular problem. Immigrant newspapers are extremely fragile and few lasted longer than two years (Blau 1989), suggesting that it is the initial appearances of newspapers, and not their life spans, that is the appropriate indicator of community mobilization.

<sup>5</sup> Year is the unit of analysis and, therefore, all covariates describe years, not papers. The values of the dispersion parameters for Poisson regression are all within acceptable limits. The approach recommended by Hannan and Freeman (1989) and Carroll (1987) for analyzing organizational foundings (specifically, as a function of density dependence) is not appropriate for this analysis because the immigrant newspapers do not define an organizational population; they are a subset of a larger heterogeneous population.

this percentage declines very, very slowly and does not exhibit the fluctuations that both immigration and newspaper establishment do. The long period spanning Depression and World War II is especially interesting. Figures 1 and 2 show that although immigration was extremely low during this long period, newspapers are founded fairly frequently, which may be due to the recovery of the immigrant press after the restrictive 1924 and 1927 Acts. In an attempt to capture this anomalous period, a variable was constructed that includes each year in the period between 1929 and 1945, termed Depression/World War II. It is also useful to note that prior to initial high immigration early in each series, there is a single blip of newspaper foundings. This is 1822 for the Old Immigrants and 1870 for the New. Neither is explicitly modeled in the analyses for doing so makes no difference for the results. However, it is noteworthy for it suggests that publisher entrepreneurs played an important role prior to the initial first wave of immigrants. A final observation at this very descriptive level is to suggest that early popular anti-foreign sentiments (in the 1840s, 1850s, and then again in the 1890s [Boyer 1978]) are not playing a major role in depressing foundings of immigrant papers.

For the purposes of these dynamic analyses, years are assigned 1, 0 values for the following variables: Depression/World War II; Unemployment Years; and, years of Restrictive Legislation. Actual values are coded for the following: Number of Old Immigrants, Number of New Immigrants, and Foreign-Born Diversity. The Appendix includes the List of sources for annual immigration data, describes measures for unemployment, immigration restrictions, and gives the procedures for computing foreign-born diversity for New York City. Finally, it is quite clear from the two figures that newspaper foundings tend to coincide with immigration waves. For this reason, we carried out preliminary analyses to determine the best way of capturing periods of peak immigration years. The strategy is to first examine the period effects of long waves and then to see which other factors influence the founding rate, but first we describe how these waves are measured.

### Wave Effects

It is assumed that sustained and high migration rates will affect the likelihood of publishing, independent of the actual, annual numbers of new immigrants. In order to estimate long periods of high immigration, we defined waves as periods in which there was sustained immigration for at least five years, with an influx of at least 200,000 in one of the years. For the Old Immigrants peak periods are: 1820-24, 1847-57, 1865-74; 1880-93; 1903-08; 1921-29; 1949-52. Peak periods for the New Immigrants are: 1899-1914; 1920-24; 1978-88. (In order to construct wave variables, the same procedure for constructing other covariates was used; specifically, each year within a given wave was coded »1« for a given wave, and all other years were coded »0«.) Preliminary tests for

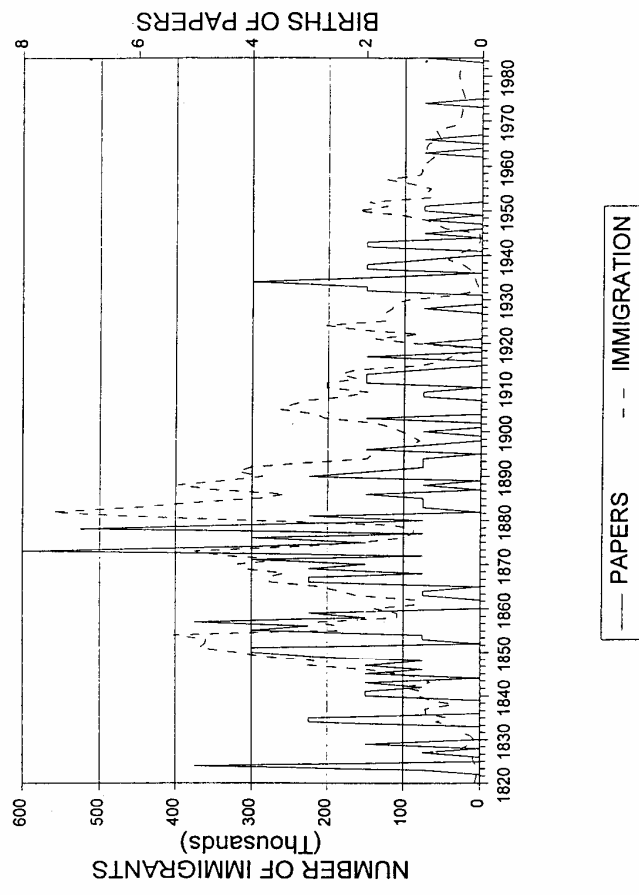
each of the peak periods were initially carried out and the results that are presented exclude those periods that were not significant. In other words, we capture immigration in two ways: by a simple estimate of new Old and New arrivals, and by estimates of long periods of time over which for which there was high and sustained immigration by each the New and Old groups.

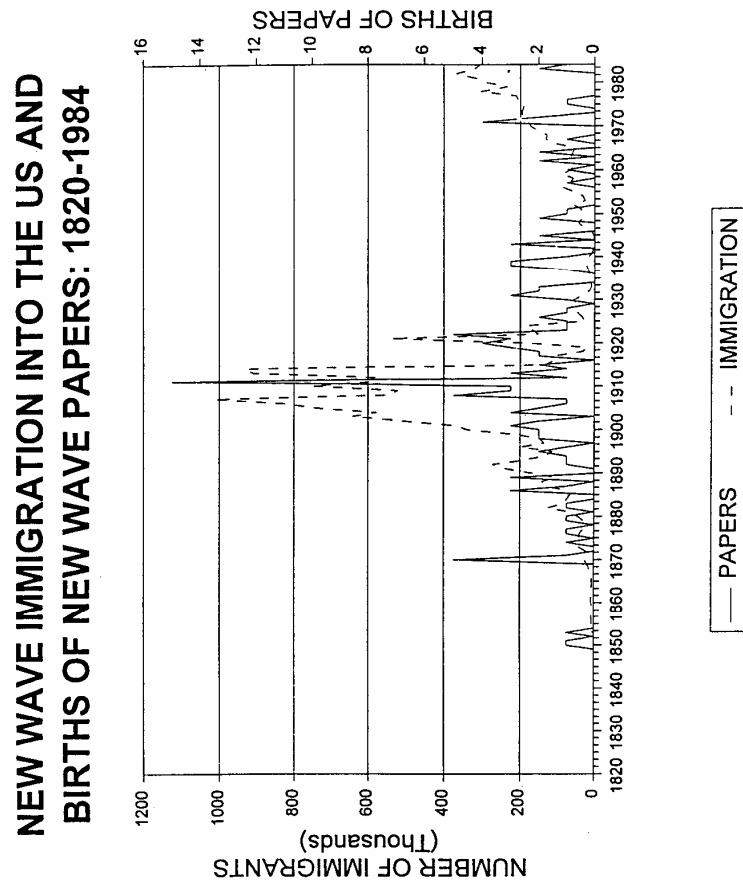
*Table 1.* Numbers of Newspapers Used in Analysis for New York City by Old and New Immigrant Groups.

Total Number of Papers of Old Immigrant Groups		Total Number of Papers of Nwe Immigrant Groups	
Austrian	6	Arabic	4
British	5	Armenian	4
Danish	2	Bulgarian	1
Dutch	2	Chinese	16
Finnish	2	Cuban	6
French	20	Czech	7
German	101	Estonian	1
Irish	32	Ethiopian	1
Norwegian	5	Filipino	1
Scottish	5	Greek	3
Swiss	2	Haitian	1
Swedish	5	Hispanic	29
Welsh	3	Hungarian	14
		Italian	28
		Japanese	7
		Korean	3
		Lithuanian	4
		Latvian	1
		Polish	10
		Rumanian	2
		Russian	23
		Serbo-Croatian	12
		Slovakian	5
		Slovenian	1
		Syrian	3
		Ukranian	4



# OLD WAVE IMMIGRATION INTO THE US AND BIRTHS OF OLD WAVE PAPERS: 1820-1984





### Results for old Immigrants

Table 2 presents the results for the combined Old Immigrants. Column 1 provides the baseline test of the wave variables, and includes the three major waves that were retained from the preliminary analyses: pre-Civil War (1847-57), post-Civil War (1865-74) and post-World War 1 period (1921-29). The results in column 1 show that there are high rates of founding in the first two periods, but slightly lower rates in the third peak period (1921-29). In column 2, the period of the combined years of the Great Depression and World War II

(1929-1945) is added, along with the years of high unemployment and the years in which immigration laws were passed. The first two waves remain significant and positive, but that of 1921-29 is no longer negative, which is probably because this decade was also one in which several restrictive laws were passed, and the variable, Restrictive Legislation, is negative. The period covering the Depression and World War 11 is not significant, which is contrary to the impressionistic evidence in Figure 1, and, as predicted, high unemployment appears to have a positive effect on the rate of newspaper founding.

The variables for estimated annual immigration for each Old and New groups are added in column 3. The results show that, independent of the peak immigration years (1847-57 and 1865-74), the annual number of Old Immigrants accompanies an increase in the foundings of the papers published by Old Immigrant groups. Contrary to the ethnic competition thesis (Olzak 1986), the annual number of New Immigrants has no effect on the papers of the Old groups. Moreover, although the positive effects of the peak periods are somewhat smaller when the annual number is controlled, the two peak periods remain significantly positive, and the effects of unemployment and restrictive legislation remain the same. In column 4, foreign-born diversity is added, and the two variables that have no effect (specifically, Depression/WW 11 and Number of New Immigrants) are excluded. The literature on ethnic identity (for example, Novak 1973; Waters 1990) suggests that foreign-born diversity in a place enhances a group's own sense of identity and consciousness of origins, which in turn ought to increase their interests in establishing newspapers. This does not appear to be the case for the NE groups. Moreover, it is evident that the positive effect of high unemployment is no longer significant.

In sum, the results for the combined Old Immigrant groups indicate that newspapers were founded during sustained waves of immigration (1847-57 and 1865-74), and also in any given year in which their own immigration is high. However, they were unlikely to be founded during the wave that coincided with the passage of highly restrictive laws, specifically, 1921-29. When all years of restrictive laws are added, as a summary variable, it has a negative effect. That is, other than waves and actual numbers of immigrants, the most important factor is restrictive legislation and it reduces founding rates. There is no strong evidence that high unemployment is important in its own right, and there is no support for the thesis that greater foreign-born diversity triggers assertions of ethnic identity through publications.

Table 2. Old Immigrant Newspapers, 1821-1984 (t-ratio Values from Poisson Regressions).

Variables	Equations			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	-1.81	-1.95	-2.29 *	-2.70 **
Peak Wave, 1847-57	5.23 ***	5.18 ***	2.62 **	3.16 **
Peak Wave, 1865-74	6.18 ***	5.82 ***	3.04 **	3.52 ***
Peak Wave, 1921-29	-2.02 *	-1.76	-1.77	-1.79
Depression/WW II		.10	.61	—
Unemployment Years		4.10 ***	3.88 ***	1.91
Restrictive Legislation		-1.96 *	-2.18 *	-2.26 *
Number of Old Immigrants			2.41 *	2.18 *
Number of New Immigrants			-.88	—
Foreign-Born Diversity				.79
Number of Papers	190	190	190	190
X <sup>2</sup>	256.61	221.40 ***	215.57 ***	219.74 ***
d.f.	4	7	9	8

\*\*\* p < .001

\*\* p < .01

\* p < .05

Note: Comparison is between each equation (2,3 and 4) and equation 1.

### Results for new Immigrants

From the preliminary analyses, two peak periods were retained for consideration in the analyses of New Immigrant newspapers: 1899-1914 and 1920-24. The results in column 1 of Table 3 Show that both waves are positive and significant. Parallel to the analyses carried out for the NE groups, the variables added in the equation in column 2 include the period of the Great Depression-World War II, high unemployment years, and the years of restrictive legislation. None of these is statistically significant and the results for the two peak periods of immigration are not altered.

In column 3, annual numbers of each Old and New Immigrants are added to the equation and neither is significant. Finally, in column 4, the measure of foreign-born diversity is added, and for purposes of parsimony, Depression/WW II and the number of Old Immigrants are excluded. In contrast with the results for the Old Immigrant groups, foreign-born diversity has a positive effect on establishing newspapers. In this equation, the effect of restrictive legislation is negative, which is consistent with the results for the Old Immigrants. This is somewhat complicated, but the analyses support the following conclusion: restrictive legislation is negative, but not quite significant, until New York's foreign born diversity and number of New Immigrants are both held constant. We suspect that the period between about 1905 and 1929 is

largely responsible. As Figure 2 shows, newspaper publications are out of synch with immigration during these years, as it is for the Old Immigrants (Figure 1), but given the extremely compact immigration period of the New, the patterns are less clear. It is, however, evident that the Old groups published no papers between 1921 and 1926, even though they maintained immigration momentum until the early 1930s. The Old groups were not as severely penalized under the quota restrictions of the 1920s as the New groups, and the New groups were also more adversely affected by the restrictive laws passed earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is evident in Figure 2 that newspapers of the New Immigrants were not as responsive to immigration volume in around 1905 to 1929 as they earlier had been. In short, the statistical analyses strengthen an interpretation of the graphs by clarifying the importance the years in which anti-immigrant laws were passed.

### Comparisons

In sum, the final results for Old and New Immigrants are similar in several respects. Peak immigration periods are superior predictors of newspapers of both groups, and annual number of immigrants is also positively related to newspaper establishment of the Old Immigrants. Restrictions on immigrants suppress the establishment of newspapers of both groups, although this effect is detected for the New immigrants only when the volume of immigration is controlled. Foreign-born diversity of the host City has a positive effect on the newspapers of the New Immigrants. This effect is unlikely to be due to labor market competition (Olzak 1986) because we have controlled for the numbers of immigrants arriving, and we assume that competition for the same jobs for immigrants is largely among new arrivals.

We initially assumed that foreign-born diversity would operate as a cultural »trigger« for identity claims by new immigrants. The contrast between the positive effects of diversity for the New groups and the absence of such effects for the Old groups is suggestive. Migration by the Old groups occurred over many decades and the origins of the newcomers were not very different from those who had settled in America even earlier. This is quite different from the experiences of SCE immigrants who arrived later in very large and very compact waves; the competition of the waves of New Immigrants was very diverse and so was that of New York City's foreign-born population after around 1880. These results suggest that diversity may trigger mobilization around ethnic identity, but only in recent times for which diversity was great and for groups whose members arrived in unusually large numbers at about the same time. Their own composition was heterogeneous and so was that of the urban population of the City.

Table 3. New Immigrant Newspapers, 1860-1984 (t-ratio Values from Poisson Regressions).

Variables	Equations			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	-1.86	-.70	-.48	-1.96 *
Peak Wave, 1899-1914	7.04 ***	6.60 ***	4.45 ***	4.06 ***
Peak Wave, 1920-1924	4.27 ***	3.35 ***	3.47 ***	3.57 ***
Depression/WW II		1.78	1.55	
Unemployment Years		.01	.04	.17
Restrictive Legislation		-1.85	-1.78	-2.20 *
Number of Old Immigrants			.15	
Number of New Immigrants			-.79	-1.36
Foreign-Born Diversity				1.95 *
Number of Papers	191	191	191	191
X 2	208.61	199.75 *	192.75 **	193.23 **
d.f.	3	6	8	7
***	p <.001			
**	p <.01			
*	p <.05			

Note: Comparison is between each equation (2,3 and 4) and equation 1.

## Conclusions

The results of this research suggest that the term »immigrant press« is more apt than the term »ethnic press«. On the basis of evidence presented in this paper, newspapers were geared more to new arrivals than to resident ethnics. Their initial publication was in synch with the numbers of new annual arrivals and with very large waves that were sustained over a period of time. Besides, these papers have always been like »fruit flies;« they lasted less than two years, an average, and most for less than a year (Blau 1998); their importance for ethnic residents, therefore, was trivial compared with that for newcomers. For the Old Immigrants, their own peak waves and number of new arrivals are the best predictors of new publications, and for the New Immigrants, their own peak waves are the best predictors of theirs'. There is no evidence that newspapers are founded alter immigration waves, which we would expect if their purpose is to provide new residents with ties to their homelands (Arendt 1994) or to hasten assimilation (Park 1922). The findings lend minimal support to Dinnerstein and Reimer's (1988) thesis that newspapers serve welfare functions for newcomers, because high unemployment is not unconditionally related to new papers. There is no support for the ethnic competition thesis (Olzak 1992) that predicts that groups mobilize and establish institutions in response to the influx of other groups.

We attempted to examine whether newspapers were involved in advancing ethnic identity. Some interesting questions that relate to whether ethnicity is instrumental, primordial or constructed (see Anderson 1991; Barth 1969; Cohen 1974) cannot be addressed by data such as ours. However, the finding that New Immigrants tend to found newspapers at high levels of foreign-born diversity offers some support for the view that an ethnic identity is constructed and contingent. We find that New York's ethnic diversity is related to the founding of newspapers for the New Immigrants, but not for the Old. Thus, a conjecture is that ethnicity was weakly constructed for Northern Europeans who arrived in a country in which native inhabitants were also mostly of Northern European extraction. However, in the twentieth century, the origins of new immigrants were fundamentally different from one another and different from those of the native population. Under conditions of such great differences, articulating and expressing a distinctive identity may have been important, but it appears so only in those years or periods in which ethnic (foreign-born) diversity was high. If anything, there is more diversity in contemporary times than the long period under consideration in this study, both with respect to immigrant streams and to resident populations, owing to transience associated with the global economy and regional instabilities. This research suggests that contemporary social movements around issues of ethnic identity may rise and subside with the levels of demographic diversity.

Our study also addresses the question about the effects of anti-immigrant policies on the immigrant press. In years in which restrictive legislation was passed, newspapers of both groups were unlikely to be established. The implication of this finding is that when immigrants are most apprehensive, they lack the very social institutions that are likely to benefit them. We do not know whether dense and informal networks are especially important in the absence of newspapers, but that is highly likely, but it is the case that rumors founded on fears and apprehension are sifted through and reported more carefully by newspapers than informally.

Publications help to reduce fears and isolation, as well as help readers make sense of their larger, and, sometimes, hostile environment. We assume that immigrant papers and ethnic institutions were essential for the steady incorporation of immigrants throughout American history. Passage of anti-immigrant legislation is again an issue in the United States, even when there are growing demands to allow more »guest workers« into the country. In the midst of these debates, it is important to consider the ways in which immigrant communities can be encouraged to establish and maintain their own buffering institutions, while also disallowing attacks on them.

## Appendix

### *Immigration Data*

National-level annual estimates were obtained from the following: U.S. Bureau of Statistics (1902-03); U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (1989); Reports of the Immigration Commission, Statistical Review of Immigration, 1820-1910, Distribution of Immigrants. (1911); U.S. Bureau of the Census (1976; various years). Numbers were divided by 100,000. Old immigrants include those from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland. New immigrants are those from elsewhere.

### *Foreign-Born Diversity*

Federal censuses of population were used to construct estimates of the numbers of foreign born in New York City, using linear interpolation procedures (see Blau, Land and Redding 1992). To achieve comparability over time with respect to categories of nativity we relied on various sources, notably Morris and Irwin (1970). Given changes in political boundaries and in the Census enumeration procedures, it is difficult to establish a definitive set of categories. However, we are confident that the misclassifications are fairly trivial. The categories are: Africa, Asia (includes China, India, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Cambodia, Korea, Laos, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Sandwich Islands), Austria, Belgium, Britain (England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales), British America, Caribbean Islands, Denmark and Greenland, France, Germany (includes Estonia), Greece, Italy (includes Sardinia and Malta), Latin America (Mexico, Central and South America), Levant (includes Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan), Luxembourg and Switzerland, Norway and Sweden, Pacific Islands (includes Australia and New Zealand), Spain and Portugal, Russia (includes Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Romania, Poland, Armenia), Turkey (includes Albania and Bulgaria), and a combined category (Bohemia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moravia, Prussia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Slovenia, Yugoslavia). The diversity index (Gibbs and Martin 1962) is:  $1 - \sum p^2$ , where p is the proportion in each category.

### *Unemployment*

Years of increases in percent unemployed were coded from Lebergott (1984) and U.S. Bureau of the Census (1991). They are: 1817. '18, '37, '38; '57, '58, '73, '74, '82, '85. '93, '94, 1907, '08, '13, '14, '20, '21, '23, '24, '29 - '33, '37, '38, '48, '49, '53, '54, '57, '69, '70, '71, '73, '74, '75, '80 - '83. Early years are based on depression cycles and subject to estimation errors.



### *Immigration Restrictions*

Years in which restrictive Immigration laws were passed were coded from Hutchinson (1981) and US Immigration and Naturalization Service (1991). All years in which restrictive laws were enacted are included regardless of the target of the law. These are: 1875, '82, '85, '91, 1903, '07, '17, '21, '24, '27, '30, '52, '64, '65, '76, '78.

### References

- Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1994. »Foreign Affairs in the Foreign-Language Press.« Pp. 81-103 in Jerome Kohn (ed.) *Essays in Understanding*. New York: Harcourt, Brace.
- Ayer, N.W. 1880- N. W Ayer & Son's *American Newspaper Annual*. Philadelphia: Ayer Press.
- Barth, Frederik. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Blau, Judith R. 1998. »Immigrant Communities and Their Newspapers in America, 1850-1930: New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Buffalo.« *Sociological Analysis* 1: 13-24.
- Blau, Judith R., Kenneth C. Land and Kent Redding. 1992. »The Expansion of Religious Affiliation, 1850-1930.« *Social Science Research* 21: 329-352.
- Boyer, Paul. 1978. *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bruchey, Stuart . 1990. *Enterprise: The Dynamic Economy of a Free People*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Carroll, Glenn R. 1987. *Publish and Perish*. Greenwich, Ct: JAI Press.
- Cohen, Abner. 1974. *Two-Dimensional Man*. London: Tavistock.
- Dinnerstein, Leonard and David M. Reimers. 1988. *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Dinnerstein, Leonard , Roger L. Nichols, and David M. Reimers. 1979. *Natives and Strangers. Blacks, Indians, and Immigrants in America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 1993. *Ethnicity and Nationalism*. London: Pluto Press.
- Fox, Louis H. 1927. *New York City Newspapers, 1820-1850*. New York: Bibliographic Society of America.
- Gibbs, Jack P. and Martin, William T. 1962. »Urbanization, Technology, and the Division of Labor.« *American Sociological Review* 27: 667-677.
- Hannan, Michael T. and John Freeman. 1989. *Organizational Ecology*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Hirschman, Charles. 1994. »Problems and Prospects of Studying Immigrant Adaptation from the 1990 Census.« *International Migration Review* 28: 691-712.

- Hofstadter, Richard. 1992 [1944]. *Social Darwinism in American Thought*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hutchison, Edward P. 1981. *Legislative History of American Immigration Policy, 1798-1965*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.
- Jaret, Charles 1979. »The Greek, Italian, and Jewish Ethnic Press: A Comparative Analysis.« *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 7: 47-50.
- Jones, Maldwyn Allen 1992. *American Immigration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Joyce, William Leonard 1976. *Editors and Ethnicity*. New York: Arno Press.
- Lebergott, Stanley. 1984. *The Americans: An Economic Record*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Licht, Walter 1995. *Industrializing America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Liebersohn, Stanley 1963. *Ethnic Patterns in American Cities*. New York: Free Press.
- Liebersohn, Stanley 1980. *A Piece of the Pie: Blacks and White Immigrants Since 1880*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Morris, Richard B. and Graham W. Irwin. 1970. *Harper Encyclopedia of the Modern World*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Nee, Victor and Bret de Bary Nee. 1986. *Longtime Californ'.* Stanford: University of Stanford Press.
- Novak, Michael. 1973. *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*. New York: Macmillan.
- Olzak, Susan. 1986. »A Competitive Model of Ethnic Collective Action in American Cities.« Pp. 29-46 in *Competitive Ethnic Relations*, edited by Susan Olzak and Joane Nagel. Orlando FL: Academic Press.
- Olzak, Susan. 1992. *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict*. Stanford: University of Stanford Press.
- Park, Robert E. 1922. *The Immigrant Press and Its Control*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Portes, Alejandro and Rubén G. Rumbaut. 1990. *Immigrant America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Portes, Alejandro and Min Zhou. 1993. »The New Second Generation.« *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 530: 74-96.
- Pozzetta, George F. 1991. »Introduction« pp. v-x in Pozzetta (ed.), *Immigrant Institutions. Vol. 5. The Organization of Immigrant Life*. New York: Garland.
- Ramage, Aliene and Mary Wescott. 1934. *Duke University Checklist of US Properly Remained Newspapers in General Library. Part 3*. Durham. NC: Duke University Press.
- Reports of the Immigration Commission, Statistical Review of Immigration, 1820-1910, Distribution of Immigrants*. 1911. Vol. 3. Washington. DC: GPO.
- Rowell, G. P. 1869- *George P. Rowell & Co.'s American Newspaper Directory*. New York: George P. Rowell.

- Seller, Maxine. 1977. *To Seek America*. Englewood NJ : Jerome S. Ozer.
- Simon, Rita J. 1985. *Press Opinion and the Immigrant: Print Media Coverage 1880-1980*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Tuchman, Gaye. 1991. »Pluralism and Disdain.« Pp. 340-358 in Alan Wolfe (ed.) *America at Century's End*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tyree, Andrea 1995. »Reshuffling the Social Deck: From Mass Migration to the Transformation of the American Ethnic Hierarchy.« Pp. 195-216 in Judith R. Blau and Norman Goodman (eds.) *Social Roles and Social Institutions: Essays in Honor of Rose Laub Coser*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press.
- United States Newspaper Program National Union List*. 1985. Dublin. OH: OCLC (microfiche).
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. Various years. *Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1990*. Washington DC: GPO.
- U.S. Bureau of Statistics. 1902-03. *Monthly Summary of Commerce and Finance. Immigration into the United States Showing Number, Nationality, Sex, Age, Occupation, Destination from 1820 to 1903*. Urbana: University of Illinois Library.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1976. *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*. Part I. Washington DC: GPO.
- U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. 1989. 1988 *Statistical Yearbook*. Washington DC: GPO.
- U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. 1991. *An Immigrant Nation. United States Regulation of Immigration, 1798-1991*.
- U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. 1994. *Statistical Yearbook*. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Walker, Mack. 1964. *Germany and the Emigration, 1816-1885*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Waters, Mary C. 1990. *Ethnic Options*. California: University of California Press.
- Wittke, Carl 1957. *The German-Language Press in America*. Lexington: University of Kentucky.